





1845

# AN EULOGIUM

ON THE LIFE AND CHARACTER

OF THE LATE

HON. THOMAS MORRIS.

---

BY W. H. BRISBANE, M. D.

---

*DELIVERED BY REQUEST OF THE FAMILY OF THE DECEASED, AND  
OF THE LIBERTY PARTY OF HAMILTON COUNTY.*

---

CINCINNATI:

PRINTED BY L'HOMMEDIEU & CO.

1845.

CAGE

E340

MR

G14

1848

112 H  
26/11/13

## EULOGIUM.

---

I cannot but congratulate myself that I am to speak in the house of those whose liberality will cheerfully pardon my freedom, if I should unreservedly sympathize with the sentiments of one who in his political views may have differed widely and strongly from themselves.\* There is a greatness of soul which some men possess, that raises them above the bigotry of their age to allow that freedom and independence of thought and action to others which they claim for themselves; and it is but justice to the gentleman who fills this pulpit with talent and dignity, and to those who sustain his ministry, to expect from them that indulgence to our honest convictions of what is truth in politics as well as religion, which probably would not be our good fortune in many other temples dedicated to that God who can be truly worshipped only by hearts truly free.

He, of whom I am to speak, was enthusiastic in his love of liberty, and measured a man's christianity by his devotion to freedom's sacred cause. I admire the spirit, and feel that I breathe in its atmosphere.

---

\* The address was delivered in the Unitarian Church, it having been generously opened for that purpose.

## FELLOW CITIZENS :

When a patriot falls, the nation should be the mourner, and when a philanthropist, the world. A patriot and philanthropist has fallen. But the nation mourns not, the world knows it not. But so surely as justice is an attribute of the Supreme Being, the generation will yet be born that will bless the memory of THOMAS MORRIS. Many have had mourners at their death, whose names have passed into oblivion. Some now live, who are called good and great, but posterity will know them not, or, if known, the memory of them will be an immortality they have no ambition to attain. But Morris is entombed in a sepulchre built up of at least three score thousand stout hearts, cemented together by the blood which flowed from the altars of 1776; and therein he lies embalmed, until this nation shall be prepared to do honor to his name and erect a monument to his memory. I know this will be considered but the language of an appointed eulogist; but I make the prophecy in good faith, and not merely to compliment, flatter, or console the friends of the deceased.

He labored for his country, he served mankind, and humanity owes him a debt of gratitude. That debt will be paid by our children. Nor will it be long ere this republic will appreciate his worth, when Liberty's banner, the stripes and the stars, will truly

“——— wave  
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave.”

That the nation weeps not, that even this my

audience does not fully sympathize with me in this expression of a grateful sense of the services of him whose life and character I invite you to contemplate, is itself an evidence that the nation needed his services, and that he was too great a man for the applause of a degenerate age.

We are now only *beginning* to honor the memory of another Western Pioneer, whose worth our fathers could not appreciate, and who died broken hearted. I mean John Fitch, whose well earned fame others robbed him of, but whose invention is now to be gratefully acknowledged by those who on our lakes and rivers enjoy the benefit of his genius, his energy, and his enthusiastic zeal. So will our children learn that Thomas Morris is worthy a nation's grateful remembrance, when the consequence of his and his coadjutors' labors shall be the restoration of man to his birthright, the unalienable right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

Permit me to detain you while I faintly sketch an outline, to be filled up by those who will arise hereafter and honor him whom his countrymen now neglect. I am sure I cannot do justice to my subject, and I most sincerely regret that upon one so indifferently qualified as myself should have fallen the duty of speaking for the honorable dead. I am no orator. I am no rhetorician. I cannot move you by voice, or gesture, or impassioned eloquence. I cannot strew the flowers of language over the grave of our friend. I cannot in-

vest my subject in the robe it merits, nor elevate my hearers to a proper estimate of the exalted worth of him I panegyricize. I have thought of the Science of Government as a proper theme, by which to unfold the value of Mr. Morris's services, but I am no political economist, I am no statesman, and I should fail to command your attention to my unsystematized theories. I have thought of addressing my audience as a Minister of the Gospel, and in a funeral discourse to speak words of consolation to those who have been bereft of a husband, a father, a brother and a friend. But neither in this could I expect to imprint upon your hearts that permanent impression of the virtues of our friend that would make them glow, and burn, and live in yourselves. I have therefore concluded to attempt nothing beyond my capacity, but to content myself with a plain and simple memoir of the deceased.

Mr. Isaac Morris, the father of Thomas Morris, was born in Berks county, Pennsylvania, near Reading, in the year 1740. His mother, Miss Ruth Henton, the daughter of a Virginia Planter, was born in 1750. At their marriage, the one was 26, and the other 16 years of age. They moved west of the Mountains about 1775. They had nine sons and three daughters. Thomas was their fifth child. Six sons and two daughters are now living, the oldest being 78 and the youngest 55 years of age. Two of them are Baptist Ministers. Mr. Isaac Morris died in 1830, his widow



in 1840, each at the age of 90. Soon after their marriage they both became members of the Baptist Church. He was a minister in that denomination 60 years, during which long period he never failed to meet his preaching appointments. He was never bled, nor did he ever take any medicine except such as grew in his fields or garden. At his death his posterity amounted to more than three hundred persons, and when his wife died in 1840 *her* grandchildren had their grandchildren. She was a great, great, grandmother—there being five living generations of the Morris family at the same time. Old Mrs. Morris in early life imbibed a lasting abhorrence of slavery and the slave-trade, from conversation with native African slaves. By the will of her father, at the death of his widow, about 1798, she became entitled to several slaves, jointly with her sister Sarah, whose husband, having the negroes in charge, expressed his readiness to comply with the terms of the will. The proposal was indignantly received by Mr. Morris, who, being unwilling to do any act that seemed to recognize the right of vesting such property in him, took no farther notice of the matter. What has since become of the slaves I am not informed.

The Hon. Thomas Morris, the subject of our address, was born January 3d, of that notable year 1776, about the time his parents moved to Western Pennsylvania. He considered himself a native of Pennsylvania; yet in consequence of the difficulty in that early day of determining the line

of division between Pennsylvania and the adjoining Southern State, it cannot be positively asserted which State has the honor of being his birth-place.

Until the treaty of Greenville, in 1794, exposure to the depredations of the Indians, and the disadvantages always attendant upon new settlements, presented such an obstacle to the establishment of good schools, that the education of Mr. Morris was necessarily very limited. His mother, however, took too deep an interest in her children's welfare to allow them to be altogether neglected. Of her twelve children, not one attained the age of six without understanding how to read. It was her habit, whenever in her Western Log Cabin she seated herself to sew or knit, to have a little boy on a low seat near her reading the Bible. She generally selected on such occasions the historic part of the scriptures, as most attractive to the juvenile mind. In this way they all acquired the habit and the taste for reading. The Bible became familiar to them, and many paragraphs were committed to memory. The Bible and the Testament were their only reading books at school. Their family library consisted of three Bibles, three or four Testaments and Hymn Books, as many Spelling Books, a Dictionary, Dilworth's Schoolmaster's Assistant, a work called the Young Man's Companion, embracing an Arithmetic, and an outline of Astronomy, Scott's Lessons on Elo-cution, part of Bunyan's and Baxter's Writings,

and twelve or fifteen volumes of Sermons and Divinity. These, with what books could be borrowed in the neighborhood, formed the basis of Mr. Morris's juvenile education.

So far as his advantages allowed, he early developed strong natural powers of mind and a ready capacity for the acquisition of knowledge. But his early life was spent in stormy times; his college was the mountain wilds, and his scientific lectures the Indians' war whoop.

His physical energies were soon developed. At the age of fourteen he made a full hand in the harvest field. At sixteen he was ever ready to shoulder the rifle to repel the aggressions of the Indians on the frontiers of Virginia and Pennsylvania. At seventeen he served some months in Captain Levi Morgan's company of Wood Rangers, stationed in the wilderness in what is now the Eastern part of Ohio. Boldness and decision were then, as afterwards, the strong traits in his character.

At nineteen years of age he became a resident of Columbia, in Hamilton county, Ohio. This was about the year 1795, seven years before Ohio became a State. He was there employed several years as a clerk for Mr. John Smith, a Minister of the Baptist Church, who afterwards was one of the first appointed U. S. Senators from the State of Ohio. He appears to have been quite a favorite with Mr. Smith. About that time his mind was much occupied with religious subjects. His thoughts on these subjects were frequently

expressed in poetic pieces. These were regarded by his friends as productions of a high order for a youth of his age and limited education. It is to be regretted that none of them were preserved.

Mr. Morris married the lady who is now his widow, November 19th, 1797, and in 1800 or 1801 he settled himself in Clermont County. In 1802 he commenced the study of law without a preceptor, and with very few books. In 1803 he was admitted to the bar. In 1806 he was elected to the Ohio Legislature as a representative of Clermont County. In 1809 he was made Judge of the Supreme Court of Ohio, to fill out an unexpired term of service. The next year he was re-elected to the Legislature, and continued to be sent either to the House or the Senate, until in 1832 he was elected by the Legislature to the Senate of the United States. His appointment to the U. S. Senate at the eventful period of South Carolina Nullification, is evidence of the high estimate the democratic party of Ohio entertained of Mr. Morris's statesmanship. The Editor of the Columbus Sentinel, in announcing his election, remarked: "To the republican cause of Ohio it is cheering to reflect, that a gentleman of his known firmness, high order of talents, and great experience, has weathered the political storm, and succeeded in an election to a station where his ability and faithfulness will find ample scope for future usefulness to his country." The Muskingum Messenger observed:—"Mr. Morris is the only Senator we have

had for a long time who firmly held the pure democratic faith, of a strict construction of the United States Constitution, and open war against all peculiar privileges and monopolies." His term of service in the U. S. Senate expired on the 4th of March, 1839. In 1841 he was nominated by the Liberty party as their candidate for the Vice Presidency, and at the late election he received the votes for that office of sixty-two thousand freemen, who knew how to appreciate a true patriot's worth, and whose voice in his favor is the highest eulogium upon his character, his patriotism, and his philanthropy. He died of apoplexy December 7th, 1844. His last words were—"Lord! have mercy upon me!"

Mr. Morris was certainly a very remarkable man. We have seen how limited was his opportunity in youth to acquire the rudiments of a good education. I may add that he did not even in after life become a scholar. Other men have risen to eminence among us, whose early education was deficient, but they studied books in their mature years, and became what we call self-taught men. But Mr. Morris was nature's pupil. He never studied the books. If we say his book education consisted in a knowledge of the Bible, and of the Declaration of Independence, and the Constitutions of Ohio and of the United States, we shall not be wide of the mark. His knowledge of history was very limited, nor was he grammatically acquainted with his vernacular tongue. Yet

despite all these disadvantages, he was a successful lawyer, a skilful politician, an able expounder of the Constitution, a statesman who ever maintained a highly respectable position in the councils of his State, and subsequently in the Senate of the United States, where, in most of the important discussions of his day, he took an active share. He was endowed by his Creator with a strong mind, in a strong body, that never knew, as I have heard him say, what it was to experience fatigue; and he was indebted to his parents for that early training in the moral precepts of the Scriptures which in after life added power to the native strength of his mind. He was a man very temperate in his living, and in his person and habits a fair representative of Ohio's worthiest farmers.

He was not a religious man in the church sense of that term, but he always acknowledged the claims of Christianity; and may we not hope that his dying words secured for him the justification of the publican, whose prayer he uttered! For, although it was an interjection, yet perhaps it expressed the faith of his heart. It would indeed be pleasant to us all, if we could address to our friend the sentiment he composed for another, not long before his own death, and say,

“’T is flesh that dies! the spirit lives  
 Immortal in a world divine,  
 And Hope its brightest prospect sheds,  
 That now that better world is thine.”

His doctrine was, that the Bible is *the* Book for *man* in *all* the relations of life. This sentiment he impressed upon the minds of his children; and their moral and religious character attests to the happy influence of his own example and precepts. That Mr. Morris had his faults, none will deny; that he sometimes erred in practice as well as in judgment, is but the common lot of humanity. That he made enemies, who regarded his faults in the light of crimes, is nothing more than the best men have always suffered. That even friends were alienated from him by their misconstruction of his motives and his acts, is only proof that they who do not know another's heart, need that charity which covers the multitude of sins. He was a man, not faultless, indeed, but who as a husband, as a father, as a friend, as a citizen, was valued most by those who had the right to know him best. He was the friend of the poor and the sympathizer with the oppressed. Such was Mr. Morris in private life. But it is to his political character I would particularly invite your attention.

In every department of his political life, in which Mr. Morris was called to act, he was remarkable for the consistency of his measures, and his devotion to the principles of Jeffersonian Democracy. He was called a partizan; but he only *seemed* so to his political antagonists. They mistook the man. He was constitutionally incapable of working in the traces of a party. Indeed he thought party organization frequently detrimental to the

success of principles. A democrat in his sentiments and feelings, his violent ardor made him appear the zealot of a party. But it was only when they sustained the principles which he believed and loved, that he sympathized with them, and appeared the advocate of their measures. There was an independent, straight forward determination to go for his principles, which allowed no compromise with opponents and no communion with temporizing friends. He was violently passionate whenever there appeared on the part of any of his own party a disposition to pursue a temporizing policy. This was the case in his cooperation both with the Democratic and the Liberty party. Doubtless Mr. Morris was pleased to be in office, and to hold high political rank; but for it he would not bend one particle of his principles, nor did he ever seem to court popularity. Not that he had no political management and skill. Far from it. His plans were far seeing and well laid; but he arranged them according to his knowledge of human nature, and upon the assumption that by the law of sequences the adoption of certain principles must produce certain effects. He pressed these principles with a determination to carry them. His plain, direct, honest, and I may say passionate advocacy of the principles of the democratic school, impressed them upon the minds of the people, and prepared them to sustain the measures of his party. He was one of the strongest speakers in the State, without the system of the



logician, the chasteness of the scholar, the grace of the orator, or the urbanity of the civilian. His power consisted entirely in the clearness of his own perception, the independence and strength of his thought, the vehement determination to impress his hearers with the importance of his object, and the impassioned fervor of his address. For a length of time he seemed to be the presiding genius of the Democratic party in the State.— Against him were aimed the shafts of the opposition, and upon him were the eyes of the Democracy, as the great champion of their cause. But it was in the Senate of the United States that Thomas Morris proved himself not a man for his party, but a man for his country. Disdaining to wear the shackles of a party, and indignant that the leaders of the Democracy should yield their necks to the yoke of the slaveholding oligarchy, he stood in the august Senate of the United States the single champion of universal freedom to man.

I cannot do better, in the short space I have, than to remind this audience of the memorable winters of 1838 and 1839, when Mr. Morris laid the corner stone of his own monument.

In 1838 he made himself obnoxious to his own party by bringing forward a series of resolutions that, on account of their denunciation of slavery, were calculated, if sustained, to drive the South from their support of Mr. Van Buren. To show the subjection of the party to the slaveholding power at that time, and the lofty character of the

subject of our eulogium, I must read to you the resolutions, on account of which Thomas Morris was abandoned by the Democrats of Ohio.

Mr. Calhoun had previously presented a set of resolutions, drawn up with much metaphysical skill, by which he designed to guard the unhallowed institution of slavery. Mr. Morris was the only man to raise his voice against them, on the true principles of human liberty. On that occasion he presented to the Senate the following:—

*Resolved*, That in the formation of the federal constitution, the States acted in their sovereign capacities; but the adoption of the same was by the people of the several States, by their agents, specially elected for that purpose; and the people of the several States, by their own free and voluntary consent, entered into the compact of union proposed in the constitution, with the view to form a more perfect union, establish justice, ensure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defence, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to themselves and their posterity; and that the means of attaining all those important objects are fully provided for in the grants of power contained in the constitution itself.

*Resolved*, That the people of the several States, in delegating a portion of their power to the federal government, which they had formerly exercised by their own legislatures, severally retained the exclusive and sole right over their domestic institutions, which they had not, by the constitution, granted to the federal government, and they reserved to individuals, and to the States in their sovereign character, the full liberty of speech and

the press, to discuss the domestic institutions of any of the States, whether political, moral, or religious; and that it would be the exercise of unauthorized power on the part of this government, or of any of the States, to attempt to restrain the same; and that any endeavor to do so would be insulting to the people and the States so interfered with; for each State alone has the power to punish individuals for the abuse of this liberty within their own jurisdiction; and whenever one State shall attempt to make criminal acts done by citizens in another State, which are lawful in the State where done, the necessary consequence would be to weaken the bonds of our union.

*Resolved*, That this government was adopted by the people of the several States of this union as a common agent, to carry into effect the powers which they had delegated by the constitution; and in fulfilment of this high and sacred trust, this government is bound so to exercise its powers as not to interfere with the reserved rights of the States over their own domestic institutions; and it is the duty of this government to refrain from any attempt, however remote, to operate on the liberty of speech and the press, as secured to the citizens of each State by the constitution and laws thereof. That the United States are bound to secure to each State a republican form of government, and to protect each of them against invasion or domestic violence, and for no other purpose can Congress interfere with the internal police of a State.

*Resolved*, That domestic slavery, as it exists in the southern and western States, is a moral and political evil, and that its existence at the time of the adoption of the constitution is not recognized by that instrument as an essential ele-

ment in the exercise of its powers over the several States, and no change of feeling on the part of any of the States can justify them or their citizens in open and systematic attacks on the right of petition, the freedom of speech, or the liberty of the press, with a view to silence either, on any subject whatever; and that all such attacks are manifest violations of the mutual and solemn pledge to protect and defend each other, and as such are a manifest breach of faith, and a violation of the most solemn obligations, political, moral and religious.

*Resolved*, That it is the indisputable right of any State, or any citizen thereof, as well as an indispensable duty, to endeavor, by all legal and constitutional means, to abolish whatever is immoral and sinful, and that Congress alone possesses the power to abolish slavery and the slave trade in this District or any of the territories of the United States; and the right of petition, of speech, and of the press, to accomplish this object, is not to be questioned, and that an act of Congress on this subject would be within its constitutional powers.

*Resolved*, That the union of these States rests upon the virtue and intelligence of the citizens in supporting the constitution of the United States, and not upon any supposed advantages it may afford to any particular State; and that it is the solemn duty of all, more especially of this body, which represents the States in their sovereign capacity, to resist all attempts to discriminate between the States; and that it would be unwise, unjust, and contrary to the constitution, to annex any new territory, or State, to this confederacy, with a view to the advantage of any State, or its peculiar domestic institutions; that such an at-

tempt would be contrary to that equality of rights which one object of the constitution was to secure alike to all the States; and if done to favor the slave-holding States, for the purpose of giving to those States a preponderance in this government, would in effect be to establish slavery in all the States.

*Resolved*, That to regulate commerce among the several States is an express power granted by the constitution to the Congress of the United States. That, in the exercise of this power, Congress may rightfully prohibit any article, though made property by the laws of a State, from being used in such commerce, if the same would be detrimental to the general welfare.

*Resolved*, That Congress have possessed the power since 1808 to prohibit the importation of persons into any State as articles of commerce or merchandise.

*Resolved*, That the political condition of the people within the District of Columbia is subject to State regulation; and that Congress, in the exercise of its legislative powers over the District, is bound by the will of its constituents in the same manner as when legislating for the people of the United States generally.

*Resolved*, That this government was founded and has been sustained by the force of public opinion, and that the free and full exercise of that opinion is absolutely necessary for its healthy action; and that any system which will not bear the test of public examination is at war with its fundamental principles; and that any proceedings on the part of those who administer the government of the States, or any of the States, or any citizens thereof, which is intended or calculated to make disreputable the free and full

exercise of the thoughts and opinions of any portion of our citizens, on any subject connected with the political or religious institutions of our country, whether expressed by petition to Congress, or otherwise, by attaching to the character of such institutions odious and reproachful names and epithets, strikes at the very foundation of all our civil institutions, as well as our personal safety, poisons the very foundation of public justice, and excites mobs and other unlawful assemblies to deeds of violence and blood. That our only safety is in tolerating error of opinion, while reason is left free to combat it.

Strange to say, ("O, tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of Askelon!") the democracy of 1838 declined the consideration of these resolutions, whilst Mr. Calhoun's, with some amendments which did not remove their pro-slavery features, were adopted as the creed of the Senate of the United States. They thought thereby to put to flight the genius of Liberty, who had been loading their table with petitions in behalf of human freedom; but in the session of 1839 they still found Abolitionism as living a spirit as ever; yea, it had been inspired with new energy by the very attempt to smother its voice, and already was it announced that the ballot box should be the rostrum from which that spirit would thunder the eloquence of the freeman's will, to make the despots of that Senate chamber tremble in their seats. And then it was that the great Missouri Compromiser, the Orator, the Statesman, the veteran Diplomatist, the embodiment of the principles of his party, and the admi-

ration of the world, stood forth the mighty champion of the despot's claims, and

“As when of old some orator renowned,  
 In Athens or free Rome, where eloquence  
 Flourished, since mute ! to some great cause addressed,  
*Stood in himself* collected ; while each part,  
 Motion, each act, won audience.”

Who then dared confront this mighty Southron ? There were veterans in that Senate chamber whose talents and learning and mighty genius had long distinguished them as giants in debate, and who were recognized among the nations of the earth, as the sages of American statesmanship. There was Buchanan of Pennsylvania, the representative of the key-stone of the arch that sustains this united republic ; his very personal appearance the just index of his capacious mind, expressed senatorial dignity. His locks were silvered by more than three score years, the greater part of which he had spent in the legislative councils of the nation. There too was the Senator of the Empire State, the calm, the courteous, the ingenious, the logical reasoner, Silas Wright, the leader of the administration party in the Senate. There was that mighty expounder of constitutional law, the representative of the old cradle of liberty, the renowned Webster, whose lofty brow developed the organs of a mind that no other man has metaphysical science enough to analyze.

Buchanan and Wright were distinguished by that talismanic title, “Democrat,” with which they could command the ears, the heads, the

hearts of the people. Webster bore that no less potent title, made noble by revolutionary scenes and the hallowed name of Washington. He was a Whig.

But no Whig was there to defend the principles for which the fathers of the republic risked their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor, and in the faith of which they breathed their last prayer for their country. Nor was it the Democratic sage, Buchanan; nor was it Silas Wright, the premier of the Democratic Government, whose voice was then heard reverberating through that chamber and its galleries, denouncing that accursed sentiment, that whatsoever the law makes property is property, though it be the bones, and sinews, and blood, and souls of men. Alas! when the illustrious western orator uttered this ignoble thought, and, Lucifer-like, fell from his empyrean heights, where he had shone a brilliant star among the brightest constellations of South American and Grecian memory, even in this debasement of himself, northern statesmen "prostrate fell before him reverent." And the great Webster himself worshipped in silent meditation the master spirits of that Senate House, the proud Kentuckian and haughty Carolinian, as they grasped hands over the body of the prostrate slave. All, all, did obeisance, except *one*, whom neither the orator's silvery voice could charm nor his thunders intimidate. That one was Ohio's Senator. He dared to speak while tyrant Senators frowned upon him.



“I come,” said he, “a free man, to represent the people of Ohio, and I intend to leave this as such representative, without wearing any other livery.”

His speech on that occasion, of which this day (February 9th) is the anniversary, presents a portrait of the man himself. Read that speech, and you know Thomas Morris. His life, his soul, is embodied in it. There is his modesty, and there is his boldness. There is his generosity and there his faithfulness. There is his uncompromising adherence to principle, his love of truth, his hatred of slavery, his devotion to Liberty. There is his mental power, his eagle vision, his patriotic ardor, his philanthropic heart ;

“The firm patriot there,  
Who made the welfare of mankind his care.”

The whole speech ought to be read to appreciate its power, but a few passages will serve to exhibit his spirit, his ability, and his eloquence.

His modest opinion of his own abilities as a speaker, and the motives that impelled him to come forward on that occasion, are well expressed in his exordium. He says :

“In availing myself of this opportunity to explain my own views on this agitating topic, and to explain and justify the character and proceedings of these petitioners, it must be obvious to all that I am surrounded with no ordinary discouragements. The strong prejudice which is evidenced by the petitioners of the District, the unwillingness of the Senate to hear, the power which is arrayed against me on this occasion, as well as in opposition to those whose rights I am anxious

to maintain, opposed by the very lions of debate in this body, who are cheered on by an applauding gallery and surrounding interests, is enough to produce dismay in one far more able and eloquent than the *lone* and humble individual who now addresses you. What, sir, can there be to induce me to appear on this public arena, opposed by such powerful odds? Nothing, sir, nothing, but a strong sense of duty, and a deep conviction that the cause I advocate is just, that the petitioners whom I represent are honest, upright, intelligent, and respectable citizens, men who love their country, who are anxious to promote its best interests, and who are actuated by the purest patriotism, as well as the deepest philanthropy and benevolence."

In another place, he says,

"Sir, I feel, I sensibly feel, my inadequacy in entering into a controversy with that old and veteran Senator; but nothing high nor low shall prevent me from an honest discharge of my duty here. If imperfectly done, it may be ascribed to the want of ability, not intention. If the power of my mind, and the strength of my body, were equal to the task, I would arouse every man, yes, every woman and child in the country, to the danger which besets them, if such doctrines and views as are presented by the Senator, should ever be carried into effect."

But, could Mr. Morris, against such tremendous odds, hope for success in combat with this monster power? "A power," which, to use his own language," claimed in human property, more than double the amount which the whole money of the world would purchase. Upon what did he rest his hope? Let his own words answer.—

“What,” says he, “can stand before this power? Truth, everlasting Truth, will yet overthrow it.”

It was this that nerved him; it was this that strengthened his heart for the conflict; it was this that enabled him to face the fiery eye of the Carolina Nullifier, and the curled lip of the Kentucky Orator, and to say to them, “I do no act but what is moral, constitutional, and legal, against the peculiar institutions of any State; but *acts* only in defence of my own rights, of my fellow-citizens, and above all of my State, I shall not cease while the current of life shall continue to flow.”

Yes, *his* arteries were filled with freeman’s blood, and it had free circulation from the heart to the extremities. His knee could never bend to worship at slavery’s altar. “SLAVERY!” he exclaimed, “a word like a secret idol, thought too obnoxious or sacred to be pronounced here but by those who worship at its shrine.” Yet *he* dared, in the midst of its worshippers, not only to pronounce the name, but to denounce the idol itself, as “a blot upon our country’s honor, and a deep and foul stain upon her institutions.”

“To say,” said he, “that I am opposed to slavery in the abstract, are but cold and unmeaning words; if, however, capable of any meaning whatever, they may fairly be construed into a love for its existence; and such I sincerely believe to be the feeling of many in the free States who use the phrase. I, sir, am not only opposed to slavery in the abstract, but also in its whole volume; in its

theory as well as practice. This principle is deeply implanted within me; it has 'grown with my growth, and strengthened with my strength.' In my infant years I learned to hate slavery. Your fathers taught me it was wrong in their Declaration of Independence: the doctrines which they promulgated to the world, and upon the truth of which they staked the issue of the contest that made us a nation. They proclaimed "that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their creator with certain unalienable rights; that amongst these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." These truths, as solemnly declared by them, I believed then, and believe now. They are self-evident. Who can acknowledge this, and not be opposed to slavery? It is, then, because I love the principles which brought your government into existence, and which have become the corner stone of the building supporting you, sir, in that chair, and giving to myself and other Senators seats in this body—it is because I love all this, that I hate slavery."

Who does not honor the man that thus honored the fathers of American Liberty? If there be any such in this audience I pity him from my very soul, for he has but one ventricle to his heart, and but one organ in his brain, and that is one that neither Gall nor Spurzheim has named. I would call it the organ of *meanness*. Perhaps such a *thing*, for I could not call such an one a *man*, is described by Mr. Morris himself in this sentence of his speech:—"I am endeavoring to drive from the back of the negro slave the politician who has seated himself there to ride into office." Such a soulless creature could not honor Thomas Morris.

Nor can that politician honor him who will not touch slavery lest the union of these States be dissolved. "Humiliating thought," said Mr. Morris, "that we are bound together as States by the chains of slavery! It cannot be—the blood and the tears of slavery form no part of the cement of our union—and it is hoped that by falling on its bands they may never corrode and eat them asunder."

In describing the encroachments of the slave power, and answering the question what has the north to do with slavery, he said:

"Slave power is seeking to establish itself in every State, in defiance of the constitution and laws of the States within which it is prohibited. In order to secure its power beyond the reach of the States, it claims its parentage from the Constitution of the United States. It demands of us total silence as to its proceedings, denies to our citizens the liberty of speech and the press, and punishes them by mobs and violence for the exercise of these rights. It has sent its agents into free States for the purpose of influencing their Legislatures to pass laws for the security of its power within such States, and for the enacting new offences and new punishments for their own citizens, so as to give additional security to its interest. It demands to be heard in its own person in the hall of our Legislature, and mingle in debate there. Sir, in every stage of these oppressions and abuses, permit me to say, in the language of the Declaration of Independence—and no language could be more appropriate—we have petitioned for redress in the most humble terms, and our repeated petitions have been answered by repeated injury. A power, whose character is marked by

every act which may define a tyrant, is unfit to rule over a free people. In our sufferings and our wrongs we have besought our fellow-citizens to aid us in the preservation of our constitutional rights, but, influenced by the love of gain or arbitrary power, they have sometimes disregarded all the sacred rights of man, and answered in violence, burnings, and murder. After all these transactions, which are now of public notoriety and matter of record, shall we of the free States tauntingly be asked what we have to do with slavery?"

In repelling the charge that Abolitionists were, by *misrepresentations*, exciting indignation against slavery, he thus spoke :

"If we hold up slavery to the view of an impartial public, as it is, and if such view creates astonishment and indignation, surely we are not to be charged as libellers. A State institution ought to be considered the pride, not the shame, of the State; and, if we falsify such institutions, the disgrace is ours, not theirs. If slavery, however, is a blemish, a blot, an eating cancer in the body politic, it is not our fault if, by holding it up, others should see in the mirror of truth its deformity, and shrink back from the view. We have not, and we intend not, to use any weapons against slavery, but the moral power of truth and the force of public opinion."

In replying to Mr. Clay's charge, that the Abolitionists were aiming at other objects than what they professed, Mr. Morris says :

"Who made the Senator, in his place here, the censor of his fellow-citizens? Who authorized him to charge them with other objects than those they profess? How long is it since the Senator himself, on this floor, denounced slavery as an

evil? What other inducements or objects had he then in view? Suppose universal emancipation to be the object of these petitioners; is it not a noble and praiseworthy object, worthy of the Christian, the philanthropist, the statesman, and the citizen? But the Senator says they (the petitioners) aim to excite one portion of the country against another. I deny, sir, this charge, and call for the proof; it is gratuitous, uncalled for, and unjust towards my fellow-citizens. This is the language of a stricken conscience, seeking for the palliation of its own acts by charging guilt upon others. It is the language of those who, failing in argument, endeavor to cast suspicion upon the character of their opponents, in order to draw public attention from themselves. It is the language of disguise and concealment, and not that of fair and honorable investigation, the object of which is truth. I again put in a broad denial to this charge, that any portion of these petitioners, whom I represent, seek to excite one portion of the country against another; and without proof I cannot admit that the assertion of the honorable Senator establishes the fact. It is but opinion, and naked assertion only. The Senator complains that the means and views of the Abolitionists are not confined to securing the right of petition only; no, they resort to other means, he affirms, to the **BALLOT BOX**; and if that fail, says the Senator, their next appeal will be to the bayonet. Sir, no man, who is an American in feeling and in heart, but ought to repel this charge instantly, and without any reservation whatever, that if they fail at the ballot box they will resort to the bayonet. If such a fratricidal course should ever be thought of in our country, it will not be by those who seek redress of wrongs, by exercising the

right of petition, but by those only who deny that right to others, and seek to usurp the whole power of the Government. If the ballot box fail them, the bayonet may be their resort, as mobs and violence now are. Does the Senator believe that any portion of the honest yeomanry of the country entertain such thoughts? I hope he does not. If thoughts of this kind exist, they are to be found in the hearts of aspirants to office, and their adherents, and none others. Who, sir, is making this question a political affair? Not the petitioners. It was the slaveholding power which first made this move. I have noticed for some time past that many of the public prints in this city, as well as elsewhere, have been filled with essays against Abolitionists for exercising the rights of freemen.

“ Both political parties, however, have courted them in private and denounced them in public, and both have equally deceived them. And who shall dare say that an Abolitionist has no right to carry his principles to the *ballot box*? *Who fears the ballot box*? The honest in heart, the lover of our country and its institutions? No, sir! It is feared by the tyrant; he who usurps power, and seizes upon the liberty of others; he, for one, fears the ballot box. Where is the slave to party in this country, who is so lost to his own dignity, or so corrupted by interest or power, that he does not, or will not, carry his principles and his judgment into the ballot box? Such an one ought to have the mark of Cain in his forehead, and be sent to labor among the negro slaves of the South.— The honorable Senator seems anxious to take under his care the ballot box, as he has the slave system of the country, and direct who shall or who shall not use it for the redress of what they



deem a political grievance. Suppose the power of the Executive chair should take under its care the right of voting, and should proscribe any portion of our citizens who should carry with them to the polls of election their own opinions, creeds, and doctrines. This would at once be a death-blow to our liberties, and the remedy could only be found in revolution. There can be no excuse or pretext for revolution while the ballot box is free. Our Government is not one of force, but of principle; its foundation rests on public opinion, and its hope is in the morality of the nation.—The moral power of the ballot box is sufficient to correct all abuses. Let me, then, proclaim here, from this high arena, to the citizens not only of my own State, but to the country, to all sects and parties, who are entitled to the right of suffrage: to the ballot box! carry with you honestly your own sentiments respecting the welfare of your country, and make them operate as effectually as you can, through that medium, upon its policy and for its prosperity. Fear not the frowns of power. It trembles while it denounces you.”

How far these sentiments, thus nobly expressed, operated upon Abolitionists favorably to the organization of the Liberty party, it is not necessary to discuss. But certainly his appreciation of the ballot box has been well succeeded by the practical demonstrations the polls have since furnished. If Mr. Clay feared the votes of Abolitionists in 1839, he now has personal reasons to wish he had not given occasion for Thomas Morris's defence of that instrumentality. The sixty-two thousand who voted the ticket on which was the name of Thomas Morris, had influence enough

to lose Mr. Clay the Presidency. And the same power will paralyze the administration of his more successful competitor.

Mr. Morris's politics were learned from his mother, when he used to read the Bible at her knees. He knew there was a harmony between the fundamental principles of the American Declaration of Independence and the democracy of the New Testament, and he felt he stood upon an immutable basis when he claimed for all men an equality of rights. His readiness to employ the Scriptures in confirmation of his sentiments, whilst they demonstrated his familiarity with them, enabled him to meet Mr. Clay with a force and power that was more than a match for that distinguished Senator's oratory and eloquence. I quote from his speech a specimen of this aptness in the use of the Scriptures. Said Mr. Morris :

“The gentleman admits that, at the formation of our Government, it was feared that slavery might eventually divide or distract our country; and, as the **BALLOT BOX** seems continually to haunt his imagination, he says there is real danger of dissolution of the Union, if Abolitionists, as is evident they do, will carry their principles into the **BALLOT BOX**. If not disunion in fact, at least in feeling, in the country, which is always the precursor to the clash of arms. And the gentleman further says we are taught by holy writ, “that the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong.” The moral of the gentleman's argument is, that truth and righteousness will prevail, though opposed by power and influence; that Abolitionists, though few in number, are greatly to be fear-

ed; one, as I have said, may chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight; and, as their weapons of warfare are not 'carnal, but mighty, to the pulling down of strongholds,' even slavery itself; and as the ballot box is the great moral lever in political action, the gentleman would exclude Abolitionists entirely from its use, and, for opinion's sake, deny them this high privilege of every American citizen. Permit me, sir, to remind the gentleman of another text of holy writ: 'The wicked flee when no man pursueth, but the righteous are bold as a lion.' The Senator says that those who have slaves are sometimes supposed to be under too much alarm. Does this prove the application of the text I have just quoted? 'Conscience sometimes makes cowards of us all.' The Senator appeals to Abolitionists, and beseeches them to cease their efforts on the subject of slavery, if they wish, says he, 'to exercise their benevolence.' What! Abolitionists benevolent! He hopes they will select some object not so terrible. Oh, sir, he is willing they should pay tithes of 'mint and rue,' but the weightier matters of the law, judgment and mercy, he would have them entirely overlook. I ought to thank the Senator for introducing holy writ into this debate, and inform him his arguments are not the sentiments of Him, who, when on earth, went about doing good."

Mr. Morris was exceedingly eloquent in meeting Mr. Clay's appeal to the women of the country to cease sending their petitions to Congress. I delight to quote it to my fair countrywomen in this audience. It is but a just vindication of their virtuous devotion to the cause of human liberty,

and I wish them too to revere and love the memory of our lamented friend.

His language was :—

“The Senator is not content to entreat the clergy alone to desist; he calls on his countrywomen to warn them, also, to cease their efforts, and reminds them that the ink shed from the pen held in their fair fingers when writing their names to Abolition petitions, may be the cause of shedding much human blood! Sir, the language towards this class of petitioners is very much changed of late; they formerly were pronounced idlers, fanatics, old women, and schoolmisses, unworthy of respect from intelligent and respectable men. I warned gentlemen that they would change their language; the blows they aimed fell harmless at the feet of those whom they were intended to injure. In this movement of my countrywomen I thought was plainly to be discovered the operations of Providence, and a sure sign of the final triumph of *universal emancipation!* All history, both sacred and profane, both ancient and modern, bears testimony to the efficacy of female influence and power in the cause of human liberty. From the time of the preservation, by the hands of woman, of the great Jewish lawgiver, in his infantile hours, and who was preserved for the purpose of freeing his countrymen from Egyptian bondage, has woman been made a powerful agent in breaking to pieces the rod of the oppressor. With a pure and uncontaminated mind, her actions spring from the deepest recesses of the human heart. Denounce her as you will, you cannot deter her from duty. Pain, sickness, want, poverty, and even death itself, form no obstacles in her onward march. Even the tender virgin

would dress, as a martyr for the stake, as for her bridal hour, rather than make sacrifice of her purity and duty. The eloquence of the Senate, and clash of arms, are alike powerless when brought in opposition to the influence of pure and virtuous woman. The liberty of the slave seems now to be committed to her charge, and who can doubt her final triumph? I do not. You cannot fight against her and hope for success; and well does the Senator know this; hence this appeal to her feelings to terrify her from that which she believes to be her duty. It is a vain attempt."

There, patriot sisters, was a becoming panegyric upon your virtue and your worth, your love of liberty, and your detestation of oppression. Go, teach it to your lisping children, and tell them who was your eloquent panegyrist, and whenever they hear the name of Morris, your sons will be reminded of the honor due to woman, and your daughters will emulate the virtue of their mothers.

But time admonishes me to bring my auditors at once to the closing sentences of that admirable speech:—

"Mr. President, I have been compelled to enter into this discussion from the course pursued by the Senate on the resolutions I submitted a few days since. The cry of Abolitionist has been raised against me. If those resolutions are Abolitionism, then am I an Abolitionist from the soles of my feet to the crown of my head. If to maintain the rights of the States, the security of the citizen from violence and outrage, if to preserve the supremacy of the laws, if insisting on the right of petition as a medium through which every per-

son subject to the laws has an undoubted right to approach the constitutional authorities of the country, be the doctrines of Abolitionists, it finds a response in every beating pulse. Neither power, nor favor, nor want, nor misery, shall deter me from its support, while the vital current continues to flow.

“Condemned at home for my opposition to slavery, *alone and single handed here*, well may I feel tremor and emotion in bearding this lion of slavery in his very *den* and upon his own ground. I should shrink, sir, at once, from this fearful and unequal contest, was I not thoroughly convinced that I am sustained by the power of truth and the best interests of the country.”

\* \* \* \* \*

“I hope, on returning to my home and my friends, to join them again in re-kindling the beacon-fires of liberty upon every hill top in our State, until their broad glare shall enlighten every valley. And the song of triumph will soon be heard, for the hearts of our people are in the hands of a just and holy Being, (who cannot look upon oppression but with abhorrence,) and he can turn them whithersoever he will, as the rivers of water are turned. Though our national sins are many and grievous, yet repentance, like that of ancient Nineveh, may divert from us that impending danger which seems to hang over our heads as by a single hair. That all may be safe, I conclude that the NEGRO will yet be *free*.”

This noble effort was the crowning act of Mr. Morris's life. I would rather have been the author of it on such an occasion, than to have the fame of any now living statesman. What though Mr. Calhoun, by his consummate powers of intel-

lect, manages to rule this nation? none need envy a mind thus prostituted to the unhallowed purpose of sustaining an institution that sinks man to brutish degradation. What though Mr. Clay, by his cataract eloquence, can rule the minds of half this people, and be the idol of their worship, whilst on his altar they 'pour the incense of awe-struck praise?' I would not be a god to employ the attributes of my divinity in protecting a monster that crushes humanity in his voracious jaws, and fattens himself on the bodies and souls of men. What though Mr. Morris had not the skill of the Carolinian, to manage Presidents and their Cabinets, and direct, without their suspecting it, their administration of the government; what though he had neither the rainbowed spray nor the electric thunders of the Western Orator; what though in his person rough and in his mind unpolished? he had a heart that beat and throbbed, not with despots and tyrants, but with the advocates of justice and the defenders of liberty; he had a heart to plead for crushed humanity; he had a SOUL.

Such, fellow-citizens, was Thomas Morris as a statesman. Has Ohio ever had a worthier Representative? Let those blush with shame who substituted in his place one who spurned the petitions of his constituents. The beacon fires of liberty, that Morris has indeed aided to rekindle on every hill top in Ohio, are sending forth their broad glare into the faces of those who repudia-

ted the patriot, and it is exposing the deformity of their moral features to an awakened people. And though Morris be dead, he yet speaketh, and while from his grave he still cries out, "TO THE BALLOT BOX," "Fear not the frowns of power, it trembles while it denounces you,"

"His love of Truth, too warm—too strong  
For Hope or Fear to chain or chill,  
His hate of Tyranny and Wrong  
Burn in the breasts he kindled still."

Yes, moral hero! we shall heed thy patriot words of fire; they shall burn with quenchless ardor, and the flame shall spread from soul to soul, until all America is resplendent with the blazing glory of the fires of Liberty:

"— for us and for our children, the vow which we have given  
For freedom and humanity, is registered in Heaven."

ERRATA.

On the 24th page, 2d line from the bottom, for "would" read *could*. In the same sentence the reader will readily correct the quotation points.











